



**MASSACHUSETTS BAY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY  
MEETING OF THE PLANNING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND  
COMPENSATION SUBCOMMITTEE**

**September 18, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.**

***This meeting was held virtually in accordance with the law permitting public bodies to continue to hold meetings remotely.***

***This meeting was broadcast virtually.***

|                                  |                                                                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>BOARD MEMBERS</b>             | Chair Thomas Koch, Director Robert                              |
| <b>PARTICIPATING REMOTELY:</b>   | Butler, Director Mary Skelton Roberts,<br>Director Chanda Smart |
| <b>PRESENTERS PARTICIPATING:</b> | Chief Workforce Officer Ahmad Barnes                            |
| <b>OTHERS PRESENT:</b>           | Counsel- Corporate Governance Noah<br>Potash                    |

**Call to Order by the Chair**

Chair Koch requested that Board Counsel call the roll of members of the MBTA's Planning and Workforce Development and Compensation Subcommittee to order at 10:00 a.m. Noah Potash called the roll of the Members participating:

|                        |                |
|------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Chair Koch</b>      | <b>Present</b> |
| <b>Director Butler</b> | <b>Present</b> |
| <b>Director Smart</b>  | <b>Present</b> |

**Approval of Minutes**

Chair Koch then turned to the approval of the minutes of the May 15, 2025 meeting.

**On motion duly made and seconded, it was by roll call:**

**VOTED: to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2025 meeting of the Planning, Workforce Development and Compensation Subcommittee.**

|                        |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| <b>Chair Koch</b>      | <b>Yes</b> |
| <b>Director Butler</b> | <b>Yes</b> |

**Director Smart**

**Yes**

Chair Koch announced that a planned presentation from the Office of Diversity and Civil Rights had been deferred to a later meeting.

*Note: Director Skelton Roberts joined the meeting at 10:01 a.m.*

Chief Workforce Officer Ahmad Barnes began a presentation on Workforce Attraction and Retention, scheduled as Agenda Item 1, by reviewing hiring in FY25, noting that the number of FTEs stands at 8,034, with a net gain of 504 for the fiscal year. He reviewed the past several years of hiring and cited the importance of increased hiring of bus operators. Mr. Barnes discussed the relaunch of the performance management program and how it would incentivize performance and improve accountability. Director Smart asked about mechanisms to review managers and Mr. Barnes said that this feature could be added in a subsequent phase. Director Skelton Roberts asked about the self-evaluation component and Mr. Barnes explained that employees and managers complete reviews separately, then review together. Director Skelton Roberts asked how the accuracy and quality of performance was measured and Mr. Barnes reviewed the history of performance management and discussed efforts to make the new system sustainable. Director Skelton Roberts asked about preventing wrongful terminations and Mr. Barnes described how performance improvement plans and written assistance plans are used to assist employees before termination is considered, including clearly defined expectations and feedback. Director Smart asked about procedure if an employee and their manager disagree and Mr. Barnes explained how those disputes are arbitrated.

Turning to employee relations, Mr. Barnes discussed a recent video on hostile work environments featuring the General Manager and the Chief Operating Officer, which

was mandatory viewing for all employees, and noted an uptick in reports since the video was launched. He reviewed ongoing work to improve the case review process. Chair Koch asked how frivolous reports are identified and Mr. Barnes discussed the process of addressing reports and how Employee Relations determines which matters need to be escalated. Director Smart asked about the impetus for the video and Mr. Barnes said that it was prompted by feedback from the workforce in the employee survey. Director Smart asked if the video was produced in-house and Mr. Barnes said that it was produced by the MBTA's Customer and Employee Experience department.

Addressing labor relations, Mr. Barnes noted that the MBTA is experiencing its longest period of sustainable relations since the 1980's and discussed ongoing work with the unions. He concluded his report with a review of recent Workforce Development events, including the APTA Student Membership Drive, an OSHA Women in Safety Event, and the MOLES Career Fair.

Chair Koch discussed difficulties with bus operator and police hiring and asked what the biggest challenge was currently. Mr. Barnes said that police hiring remained a challenge but that potential changes in the legislature could prove helpful. He also discussed work to improve bus operator hiring. Director Skelton Roberts asked if hiring was straining the budget and Mr. Barnes discussed the difficulties of hiring in the current labor market. Director Skelton Roberts asked if there had been a strategic decision not to hire as aggressively in FY25 as in FY24 and Mr. Barnes said that there had not been any decision along those lines, explaining that the goal in FY24 was to fill the floor and that expanded promotional growth could be expected next year. Director Skelton Roberts said that the distinction between internal and external hiring was helpful context for the hiring

numbers. Director Butler asked how many of the separations were retirees and Mr. Barnes said that he could follow up. Chair Koch opined that it was likely that the majority were retirees.

At the end of the agenda, Chair Koch requested a motion to adjourn.

**On motion duly made and seconded, it was by roll call:**

|                                 |            |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Chair Koch</b>               | <b>Yes</b> |
| <b>Director Butler</b>          | <b>Yes</b> |
| <b>Director Skelton Roberts</b> | <b>Yes</b> |
| <b>Director Smart</b>           | <b>Yes</b> |

**VOTED: to adjourn at 10:29 a.m.**

**Documents relied upon for this meeting:**

- September 18, 2025 Planning, Workforce Development, and Compensation Subcommittee Agenda
- May 15, 2025 PWDC Meeting Minutes
- Revised Workforce PWDC September 2025